A FAITHFUL WARNING, WITH GOOD COUNSEL & ADVICE, TO THE Rulers & Magistrates IN ENGLAND,

That they may not *countenance* Wicked and Merciless Men to oppress and spoil the Innocent under Pretence and Colour of a Law.

By one that really desireth the Prosperity of the Truth, and the Welfare of all Men, *Alexander Lawrence.*

And Judgment is turned away backward, and Justice stands afar off; for Truth is fallen in the Street, and Equity cannot enter.

Yea, Truth faileth, and he that departeth from Evil maketh himself a Prey; and the Lord saw it, and it displeased him that there was no Judgment, Isa. 59. 14, 15.

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A FAITHFUL WARNING WITH GOOD Counsel & Advice, &c.

TO You *Rulers* & *Magistrates* in this Nation and else-where, who think to establish Cruelty and Oppression by a Law, and thereby to exalt your selves, and Lord it over the Heritage of the most High God, as the Seed of Evil-Doers did in all Generations, as you may read in the Scriptures of Truth, *Exod.* 5. 2. and so on. *Pharaoh*, that great Oppressor, when *Moses* and *Aaron* spake unto him, to let *Israel* go to serve the Lord, said, *Who is the Lord that I should obey his Voice, to let* Israel *go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let* Israel *go*, &c. but instead thereof made their Task heavier, *v.* 6. 7. So proud *Haman* whom King *Ahasuerus* gave Command that all should bow unto, but honest-hearted *Mordecai*, who was as much or more the King's Friend as *Haman*, did not therein obey the King's Command, knowing *Haman* to be of the *Agagites*; and when *Haman* understood, he was vexed, but thought it Scorn to lay his Hand on *Mordecai* alone, but sought the Destruction of all the *Jews*, as you may read, *Ester* 3. at large. And for *Nebuchadnezzar*, who made an Image of Gold, and set it up in the Plane of *Dura*, in the Province of *Babylon*, and commanded that all should, *at what Time they heard the Sound of the Cornet, Flute, Harp, Sackbut, &c. fall down and worship the Golden Image, &c.* Dan. 3. at large; but *Shadrach*, *Meshach* and *Abednego*, whose Hearts were upright and stedfast before the Lord, would not; and it was told the King, and the King was full of Fury, &c. and said, *Who is that God that shall deliver you out of my Hands*, verse 15. *&c?* And the back-sliding *Jews*, when their Hearts turned from God, though they cryed, *The Temple of the Lord*, &c. yet they kill'd the Prophets, and stoned them that were sent; and when Christ the Son was come

who is Heir and Lord over all, they said, *We have a Law, and by our Law he ought to dye.* Several more Instances might be given, how many went about to establish Cruelty and Oppression by a Law, as in the *Ten Persecutions*, and in Queen *Mary*'s Dayes, who was called, *A Christian Princess*, yet how many suffered *Martyrdom* by a Law in her Dayes, for their Testimony for God and the Truth, according unto what God had manifested unto them in their Day and Time; and if you go about to do the same Thing, and persist in it, know ye, that the Lord God of Heaven and Earth, whose Power is *Unresistible*, when he riseth to plead with Man for Sin, and whose Glory far excels the Sun in its Brightess; the same Way by which you think to *exalt your selves*, and *Lord it over his Heritage*, will he assuredly bring you down, and cause you to bow before him, either to acknowledge his Power and Soveraignity over all, and that *he alone ought to be worshipped*, as King *Nebuchadnezzar* did, and that *in Truth and Uprightness of Heart*, or worse, to wit, bring Destruction upon you, as he did upon *Pharaoh* and his Host, who thought to bring *Israel again into Bondage*; and as he did *Haman* and his Sons, who thought to have the whole Stock of the *Jews* in the Provinces of King *Ahasuerus*, destroyed; but the Lord wrought their Deliverance, and brought Destruction upon their Enemies: therefore *in vain is it for Man to strive against his Maker*; for when did any arise up against God and his People, and prosper? Therefore be instructed, and take Counsel you *Rulers* and *Magistrates* in this Nation, and elsewhere, who oppose the Appearance of God in his People, and would limit all according to your Way and Will, or otherwise they must suffer; be not overwise in your own Eyes, neither think it an *Undervaluing* unto you to take Counsel and Advice at so mean a People as we, the despised People of the Lord called *Quakers*, are: For of a certain Truth, God in the Riches of his Love, in and through Christ Jesus, our Lord and alone Saviour, hath appeared unto us, and manifested the Way of Life and Salvation in us, and unto us by his good Spirit, which he hath given unto us to profit withall; and many have been the *Admonitions*, *Counsels* and *Advice* of the Lord unto you, through and by his Servants; which ye too little have regarded, but rather made a Mock of them and what they have spoaken and written, accounting them as *Mad Men*, as they of old did the Servant of the Lord, 2 *Kings* 9. 11. Nevertheless, as a Servant

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of the Lord, and in Love and Good-will unto you, as one that really desireth your Good & the Good of all Men, my Advise and Counsel unto you is, to hearken and lend an Ear unto that *Light* in you, which secretly manifests Sin, and reproves for it; for of a certain Truth, that is a Measure of the Good Spirit of God, that will reprove you for your Cruelty & Oppression, and shew you *you should not do so against your Fellow-Servants*; *That* will reprove you for your Pride and Haughtiness of Spirit, and shew you *what is Good, and what the Lord requires of you, that is, to do Justly, to love Mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God*, Mic. 6.8. That will reprove you for Swearing, Cursing, Vain and Idle Talking, Wantonness, Whoredom, Drunkenness, and all Manner of Uncleanness and Evil whatsoever, though done never so secretly, yet the Lord is privy to it, and his all-seeing Eye beholds all the *Actions* of the Sons and Daughters of Men, and by the Measure of his Good Spirit he strives with them, and sheweth them they should not do the Thing that is Evil; and by the same calleth unto them for *Amendment of Life*; and those that *turn at the Lord's Reproof, he will pour forth his Spirit upon them, and make known his Words unto them*; but if *you set at nought the Counsel of the Lord, and will none of his Reproofs* (as some of Old did, and too many now do) *then will he laugh at your Calamity, and mock when your Fear cometh as Desolation, and Destruction as a Whirl-wind*; *then you may call, and he'l not answer, and seek him early, and not find him, because you hated Knowledge, and did not chuse* (mark that) *the Fear of the Lord which is to depart from Evil*.

Therefore must you eat the Fruit of your own Way, and be fill'd with your own Devices that do so; *But who hearkeneth unto the Lord, shall dwell safely, and be quiet from Fear of Evil*, Prov. 1.25. and so on: Therefore be instructed ye *Rulers* of this Nation, and take Counsel of the Great Law-giver Christ Jesus, who said, *As ye would that all Men should do unto you, so do you unto them; for this is the Law and the Prophets*; and remember the Parable that Christ spoak, *A certain King which would take Account of his Servants, & when he began to reckon, there was one brought before him that ow'd him ten Thousand Talents, & had nothing to pay withal; but his Servant humbled himself, &c. and his Lord frankly forgave him the Debt; but he not doing so by his Fellow-Servant*, what did befal him? And doth not Christ teach his to pray, *Forgive us our Trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us*? Now if you cannot forgive them that trespass a-

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gainſt you, how can you expect to be forgiven of God? And if Men ought to forgive them that treſpaſs againſt them, then ſure, they ought not to perſecute ſuch as never treſpaſſed againſt them I would ask you one *Queſtion*; Wherein have we given Occaſion to be thus dealt with? what *Plots* or *Evil Contrivances* againſt the King or Government have we been found in ſince God raiſed us up to be a People? or what have you againſt us, except in the Matter of our God? Now if you ſhould ſay, *We do not obey the Law*, I then again query, What wholeſom Law is there that we diſobey? But if it be a Law that would limit in the Worſhip and Service of God, who alone in that Caſe is the Law-giver to his People, and ought to be ſubjected unto, then I query, What Power have you to make a Law to bind the Conſciences of God's People in the Worſhip of God more then Queen *Mary* and her Parliament had, by which ſo many *Proteſtants* were put to Death (which you condemn as Evil in them) for the Teſtimony of their Conſciences, according unto what God in their Day made manifeſt unto them; was not ſhe called a *Chriſtian Princeſs*, and lawfully deſcended to the Crown, &c? But if you ſay, *They were perſecuted becauſe they bore Teſtimony to the Truth, but you becauſe you are in Error, &c.* How do you know that? could not the Miniſters of thoſe Laws ſay as much to the Sufferers as you do unto us? are you guided by an infallible Spirit in what you do? nay ſure, for the Spirit of God never led any to ſuch Things; but if any were in Error, they were to be reproved and admoniſhed, and after the ſecond Admoniſhing rejected, not caſt into Priſon, or ſpoiled of their Goods, and the like. But it may be ſome may ſay, *They had not Power*; Was not all Power in Heaven and Earth given unto Chriſt? and where did he give his Church (as you would be reckoned) Power to do ſo? And therefore you that are called *Lord-Biſhops*, and *Miniſters*, and *Spiritual Men*, ought not you rather, if Men were in Error, to convince them by the Truth, and ſtop the Mouths of Gain-ſayers by ſound Doctrine, then to ſtir up *King* and *Parliament*, to make Laws to take honeſt Men and Womens Eſtates from them, impriſon and baniſh them for their Conſciences towards God, and becauſe they cannot put into your Mouthes; and alſo to preſs the Miniſters of thoſe Laws to put them into Execution? did ever *Peter*, *John*, *Paul*, or any of thoſe *Biſhops* and *Goſpel-Miniſters* do ſo? Is this like *Truth* or *Goſpel Diſpenſation*? Nay ſure, therefore away with it all, you that profeſs *Chriſtianity*

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of all Sorts, whether *Papists*, *Episcopal Men*, *Presbyterian* or what soever, and learn to *do as you would be done by*; and the same Liberty you would have your selves, the same give unto others in Exercises of Religion, they living Peaceable, not seeking the Subversion of the Government, nor the Hurt of any; and this would heal the Nations Breaches, and make it as a Body or Family, as it ought to be, seeking the Good & Preservation one of another, both in Liberty and Estates, &c. But this persecuting, killing and destroying one another about Religion, never was of God, but sprung from the Devil, the Father of all Cruelty and Persecution; for Truth hurts none; he *came not to destroy Mens Lives, but to save them.* But it may be some may say, *This is not Cruelty, but a Law that is for the Good of the Nation*; so might all say that made Laws in such Cases; but I say, it is not any Law or Custom of a Nation whatsoever that can justifie any Man before the Just and Equal God, in doing the Thing that is unjust, and whatever is contrary to Christ's Command (who said, *as ye would all Men should do unto you, so do ye unto them*) is unjust, and to be accounted for unto the great Law-giver Christ Jesus: Therefore do not smooth and flatter your selves in saying, *We have a Law (and the like)* for the same did they say that are gone before you, who were found doing the same Things, and so justifie the Wicked, and condemn the Sufferings of the Righteous in all Ages; *But he that justifieth the Wicked, and he that condemneth the Just, even they are both Abomination to the Lord*, Prov. 17. 15. It is your Good we desire, and many Times it is in our Hearts bowed down before the Lord, both in Soul and Body, to pray unto him in your behalf, that he would change your Hearts, and cause you to be otherwise minded, that we might live a godly and quiet Life in all Honesty as becometh the Gospel: and if for these and such like Things we suffer, the Good will of him that appeared in the Bush (who had heard, and doth hear the Groans of his People, and was come down *to deliver them*) be done, who hitherto hath given us Strength and Patience to undergo what he hath suffered to be inflicted *upon us for his Name sake*, and our Hope and Trust is, will do unto the End, as we abide faithful to him, to whom be *Glory over all, forever*, Amen.

From One that really desires the Prosperity of the Truth, and the Welfare of all Men, Alexander Lawrence